

***Men Bleed Too: A Compelling Story About One Man's Struggle to Help His Wife Fight Breast Cancer***

By Thomas Brown

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Reviewed by Richard R. Blake for Reader's Views (11/06)

This is the story of Barbara Brown's fight with cancer as told by her husband, Thomas. In December of 1992 a cancerous tumor was discovered in Barbara's right breast. Written from a man's point of view, "Men Bleed Too" provides basic information to help the male caretaker through the process and journey of this lonely battle for the life of a loved one. The subtitle of the book sums up Thomas Brown's account, "A Compelling Story About One Man's Struggle to Help His Wife Fight Breast Cancer!"

Tom began journaling detailed events of Barbara's battle, medical care, and emotional stability in December of 1992. The journal became the focal point of his day. His entries include medical decisions, care management, medications, treatments prescribed, and the emotional roller coaster of feelings related to both the bad news and the encouraging signs of small miracles. This is a story of inner courage, strength in crisis, and of an unwavering faith.

After treatment for the original breast cancer it was discovered that Barbara had another battle to face, leukemia. The Brown's story includes discussion of treatment procedures, chemotherapy, surgery, recurrence, infections and pulmonary arrest. These detailed explanations of the disease, the treatment, medications and their side effects make this an important guide for any cancer caregiver.

I was especially touched as Thomas shared the closeness of his family relationships and of the strength he received from his sons and other family members even as he was in the process of helping them through the process of impending loss and grief.

I identified with Thomas as he shared how he handled the mundane daily routines that provide both structure and escape from facing the uncertainty of disease. As Tom tells of things like, walking the dogs, mowing the lawn, and reporting for work, he helps the reader realize they are not alone in facing the issues that accompany the role of a caregiver. After fighting the disease for nearly two years, Barbara died. Her long and determined struggle was characteristic of her strength and character as a person.

The author's desire in writing this book was to help those with loved ones battling cancer. He has succeeded in doing this by sharing his deepest emotions and intimate details of his struggle.

I appreciated Brown's honesty and openness. He is articulate and a gifted communicator. Whether facing cancer or other debilitating disease, this is a book that will provide valuable information and inspiration to help the reader meet the challenge ahead. This is an excellent guidebook and a heartwarming story.